Special edition!

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Portsmouth CITY COUNCIL

house talk

FOR RESIDENTS AND LEASEHOLDERS

Autumn 2012

WIN!
Family day out or shopping voucher!

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF COUNCIL HOUSING IN PORTSMOUTH

IN THIS ISSUE:

RESIDENTS GO FOR GOLD!

BLOOMIN' LOVELY GARDENS!

CHANGES TO BENEFITS COMING SOON

Welcome to ye olde House Talk!

This House Talk looks different because on 24 October 2012, it's exactly one hundred years since the first social housing in the city was built in Portsea – turn to pages 4 and 5 to find out how we're celebrating and how you can get involved. There are also two brilliant competitions, bloomin' marvellous gardens, important information about housing benefit and a hip history Kids Talk special.

See you at Christmas!

Here's what's inside:

3 Bye to the Navigators
4 Historic housing
6 Festival of Christmas competition
8 Changes to housing benefit
9 Win a £35 Cascades voucher
10 Bloomin' lovely gardens
13 Residents go for gold
14 CLG results
16 Waterlooville Family Games
17 Adventure playgrounds
19 Out & about
20 Kids Talk

You can get this Portsmouth City Council information in large print, Braille, audio or in another language by calling 023 9283 4479.

House Talk is produced by Portsmouth City Council. www.portsmouth.gov.uk

On the cover: children in Portsea, 1920s. The first Portsmouth council houses in Curzon Howe Road can be seen in the background.

talk to us

Resident participation team: **0800 032 1531**
participation@portsmouthcc.gov.uk
Chaucer House, 20-28 Isambard Brunel Road, Portsmouth, PO1 2DR

Leaseholder services (call by postcode)

PO1, PO2, PO7	call **9283 4561**
PO3, PO4, PO5	call **9284 1486**
PO6, PO9, PO8	call **9283 4845**

Area offices:

Buckland	**9260 6500**
City South	**9260 6300**
Landport	**9260 6400**
Leigh Park	**9230 6900**
Paulsgrove	**9260 6030**
Portsea	**9260 6200**
Wecock Farm	**9260 6100**
Out of hours	**9282 4244**

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Competitions: Competitions in House Talk are open only to residents who live in a Portsmouth City Council property. They are not open to employees of PCC.

Bye to the Navigators!

The resident participation team is moving out of the Navigators Resource Centre.

Originally a pub, the centre has been an office for council residents, leaseholders and staff since 2003. Residents Dorothy Lavington, Jenni Cole, Cyril Stubbs and Wendy Pearce, along with Andrew Myatt (manager of the resident participation team at the time) and Gareth Parry (planned maintenance) worked hard to turn it into a centre for residents to use.

The national charity Barnardos will be using the Navigators building from now on.

A new home for resident participation

The resident participation team is moving to the ground floor of Chaucer House (which is still on Isambard Brunel Road, the same road as Navigators) and will still have superb facilities:

- two meeting rooms with new furniture and audio video facilities
- a dedicated residents' office
- a chill out area for informal discussions and meetings
- a staff office
- a kitchen with appliances

The move is saving £35,000 (a year) which will be used in your service.

The team should be settled into their new home as we print House Talk, and are planning a 'welcome to Chaucer House' for you to meet the team and resident volunteers, and try your hand at some fun activities.

What's the new address?

The new address is **20-28 Isambard Brunel Road, Portsmouth, PO1 2DR**. The team's telephone numbers and email addresses will stay the same. The free phone number also stays the same: 0800 032 1531.

Historic Housing!

As you may have noticed, this issue of House Talk looks a bit different than usual.

This is because 24 October 2012 is an important date for council housing in the city: it's exactly 100 years since the first social housing was finished in Portsmouth. To celebrate this, there's a lot happening from 24 October and into 2013.

On the day itself, there's a small party at the Groundlings Theatre in Curzon Howe Road, Portsea, and a special evening presentation of 'Through the Decades' which will feature 100 years in 100 minutes.

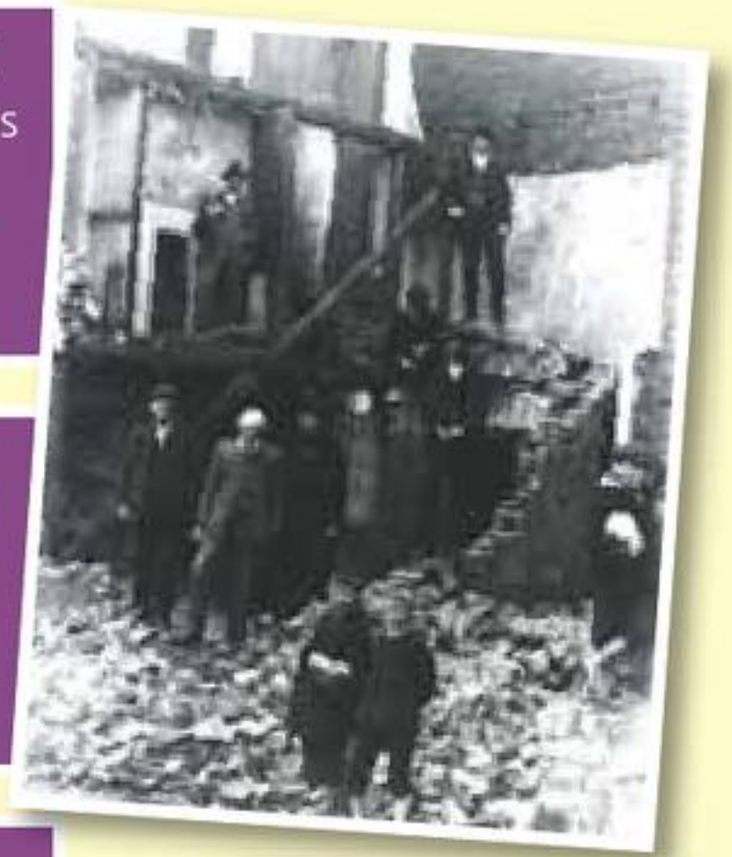
During the afternoon on Wednesday 24 October, there will be plenty of activities on offer. Starting at 2pm, you can discover facts about local history including the Dickens project, chat to staff and residents, and enjoy light refreshments throughout the afternoon. Local school children will also open the events later in the day with a special ribbon-cutting ceremony.

You don't need to live in Portsea to take part. Everyone is welcome to come along to these events. Contact Bill Moody in the resident participation team for more information.

Curzon Howe Road timeline

Photo supplied by Anthony Triggs

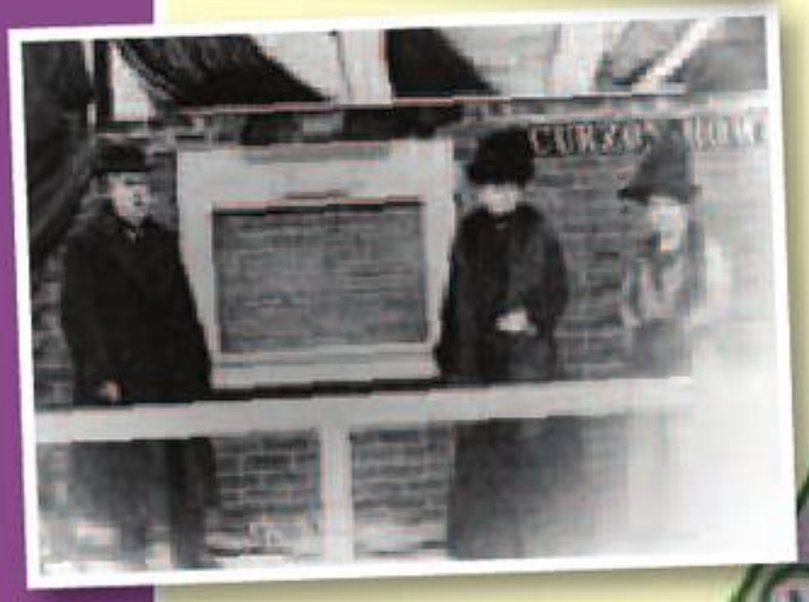
1909: Dr Mearns Fraser, Portsmouth's medical officer of health, described homes in the slums of Portsea as "old and dilapidated" and recommends they are cleared under the new Housing Act.



1910: 200 properties are demolished in Whites Row, Portsea – one of the worst slum areas. The houses were set on fire first, to help kill the rodents, bugs and fleas that infested them.

1912: The first council houses in Portsmouth are built on site of Whites Row: 43 two-storey houses. Curzon Howe Road (named after Admiral Curzon Howe) is created. The homes are for residents who had lived in the slums.

On 24 October 1912, a plaque was placed at the entrance to Curzon Howe Road to mark the clearance of the area, and to welcome in a new era of acceptable housing standards in Portsmouth.



Monumental birthdays

L-R: Lily, John and Doris

Three residents at Elsie Fudge House are celebrating some important birthdays this year. Doris, Lily and John are turning 100, 90 and 70 respectively. The cheerful trio enjoy a variety of social activities and great company at the sheltered scheme in Crookhorn.

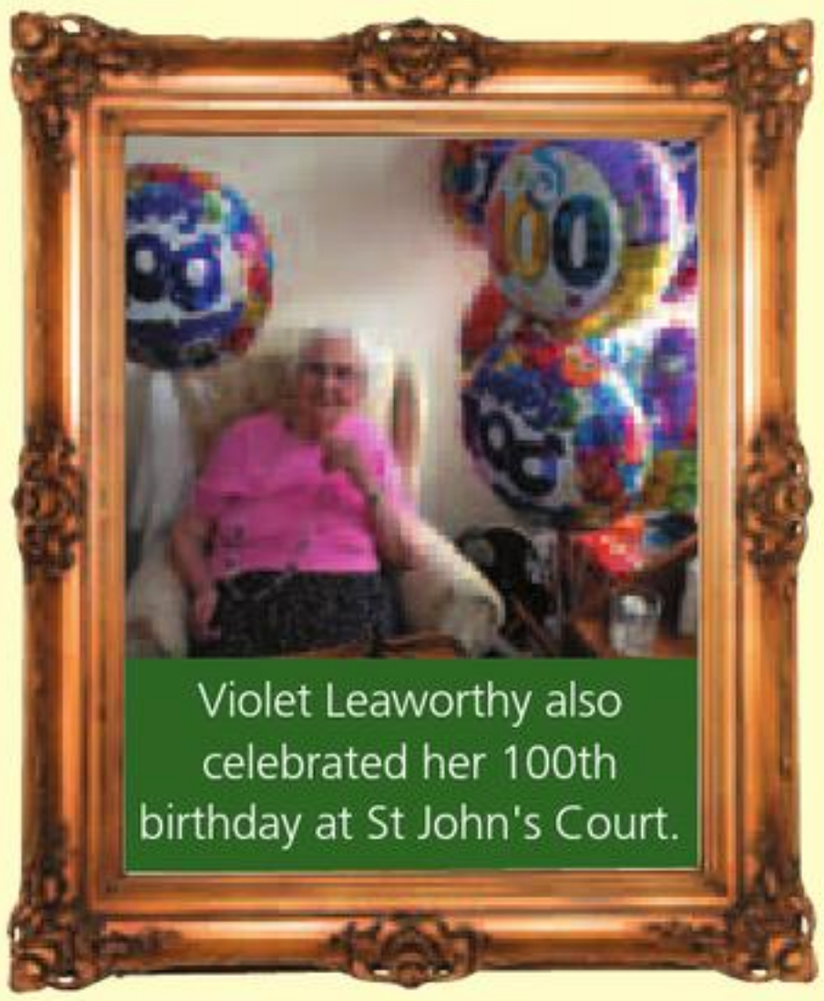
It hardly seems possible that Doris Awcock is 100-years-old this year, but on 15 November she will be celebrating her centenary with family.

She puts her long, healthy life down to a daily cooked breakfast and lots of walking. Doris fondly remembers her time working in a corset factory in Portsmouth, where she kept only nine pence a week from her salary and gave the rest to her mum for food and board.

Doris is a lifelong Portsmouth resident and was married at St Mark's church in North End. Her son and daughter have given her six wonderful grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Lily Waterman has been a council tenant all her married life, moving from her parents' house in Commercial Road to The Warren in Leigh Park, and has lived at Elsie Fudge House for six years.

We wish all our residents a very special happy birthday.



Violet Leaworthy also celebrated her 100th birthday at St John's Court.

Lily shares her memories

Lily Priest has been a resident of Curzon Howe Road, Portsea, since she was six, when she moved there with her mother, two sisters and four brothers in September 1935.

Lily, who finally left the house in June to join sister Ethel at Ian Gibson Court, said: "It was a really big house with three bedrooms and a long garden, and very convenient as my brothers were apprentices in the dockyard. We had some lovely neighbours there, good friends."

Being the second youngest child, Lily and her younger sister Amy were evacuated to Basingstoke at the age of eight, but she has fond memories of her childhood at 44 Curzon Howe Road. In 1977, Lily remembers celebrating a rainy Queen's Silver Jubilee at a party at the Beneficial School (now the Groundlings Theatre) with friends, family and plenty of food and fun.

Former neighbours Clive and James helped Lily with the move to Ian Gibson Court, and friend Linda still visits every Thursday with shopping. She also has regular visits from sister Amy. Lily has seen many changes, particularly around Queen Street, since the days of Mr Tea the grocer and Mr Drew the butcher. She still has good friends in the road where the story of council housing in Portsmouth all began.

Lily and her family on Southsea Common in the 1930's. Lily is left, on the bottom row.

WIN! A family ticket to the FESTIVAL of CHRISTMAS

We have three family tickets (two adults, two children) to give away to Portsmouth Historic Dockyard's fantastic Victorian Festival of Christmas, which is taking place from Friday, 30 November to Sunday, 2 December.

This annual family favourite features Dickensian snowy streets, a traditional green Father Christmas, baby reindeer, festive food and the largest Christmas market on the south coast.

For your chance to win, can you name this busy Portsmouth street (pictured left) which was snapped in 1962? **Clue: it's fit for royalty.**

Send your answers to participation@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or by post to 20-28 Isambard Brunel Road, Portsmouth, PO1 2DR by Friday, 9 November 2012.

For more on the festival, visit: **www.christmasfestival.co.uk**

Delve into the city's archives

As part of the 'A Tale of One City' project which celebrates the 200th anniversary of Charles Dickens' birth the council are offering training until the end of this year for residents to use the city's archives.

Discover how to access the archives for research and community participation, including practical handling advice, information about oral history and learn how to look after your own collections.

To find out more contact Anna Delaney on **(023) 9282 7261** or email **anna.delaney@portsmouthcc.gov.uk**

CLIVE'S POEM

91-year-old resident Clifford (Clive) Willis has lived in Sarah Robinson House in Portsea for 10 years. He wanted to share a poem that he wrote in 1942, during the Second World War.

Until tomorrow

Only for a little while, the sighing and the sorrow
Only for a little while, there'll come a great tomorrow
The end of all the heartache, all the parting, all the pain
The effort and the sacrifice will not have been in vain.

There'll be a finer, fairer world, a better way of life
A future for our children, free from tyranny and strife
Through the darkness I can see the light of hope now dawning
So watch and wait and pray with faith, endure until the morning.

Written by Clifford George Willis

Edgbaston buggy store is dedicated to Charlie

The widow of a popular chairman of a residents' association has opened a mobility scooter buggy store in her husband's memory.

It was built as part of the Somerstown regeneration project and has been dedicated to former resident Charlie Hutfield. Charlie was chairman of Edgbaston House resident's association for 10 years until he died, aged 78, on Christmas Eve 2009.

Proud widow Sonia was joined by her husband's friends, family, neighbours, and representatives of Portsmouth City Council at the official opening of the new building in July.

Sonia said: "He knew everybody in the block. If anybody had a problem he would help them solve it. He worked for 10 years for this buggy store so he would be very proud to see his family and friends getting together to open it in his memory."

Data matching

Portsmouth City Council is currently participating in an exercise to promote the proper spending of public money as part of the Audit Commission's 2012/2013 anti-fraud initiative.

We are required by law to protect the public funds we administer and will be sharing information provided to us (including data about tenants and leaseholders) with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds in order to prevent and detect fraud.

For more details, see **www.portsmouth.gov.uk/yourcouncil/18423.html** or contact Karen Gibbs on **(023) 9284 1266**.

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CHANGES TO HOUSING BENEFIT ARE COMING

The Welfare Reform Act will change the way housing benefit is awarded to some residents. **These rules will affect anyone who is of working age, and is receiving housing benefit or has made a claim.**

From April 2013, the number of people in your household will affect the amount of benefits you receive. The new rules allow one bedroom for:

- Every adult couple (married or unmarried)
- Any other adult (aged 16 or over)
- Any two children of the same sex (under 16)
- Any two children aged under 10 (regardless of sex)
- Any other child (other than a foster child or child whose main home is elsewhere)
- A carer who does not live with you but provides you or your partner with overnight care

What does it mean?

If you're assessed as having more bedrooms than deemed necessary in your household, you'll be 'under-occupying' the property and the amount of housing benefit you receive will be reduced by:

- **14% for under-occupancy by one bedroom** (approx. £25 per fortnight based on current rents)
- **25% for under-occupancy by two bedrooms or more** (approx. £45 per fortnight based on current rents)

Think you're going to be affected?

You need to think how you'll manage if your housing benefit is reduced.

You may want to try and find a smaller home, or you might want to stay where you are and pay the extra money yourself. You could do this by finding a job, increasing your hours in a current job or even taking in a lodger. Whatever you decide to do, it's your responsibility to make sure your rent is covered.

We are also writing to the residents we think will be affected by the changes, but if you think you are under-occupying your property and would like to discuss your options, please **contact your local area housing office who will be happy to help.**

Other changes to welfare benefits include the introduction of universal credit from October 2013. More information will follow in future issues of House Talk.

KEEP WARM AND CARRY ON

If your home was chilly last winter, now's the time to start making plans, especially if your heating system isn't up to scratch, or you don't have proper loft or cavity wall insulation.

Efficiently heating your home will save you cash – but it's important to your health too.

Between 150 and 300 Portsmouth people die from cold-related illnesses each winter.

We can help. Just call us on (023) 9268 8369 if you would like to talk to someone about improving the level of heating in your home.

WIN! a £35 Cascades shopping voucher

We've got six fantastic shopping vouchers (each to the value of £35) to spend at the Cascades Shopping Centre – just in time for Christmas shopping!

To win this prize, just answer this question:

What year did the Cascades Shopping Centre open?

a) 1986

b) 1989

c) 1992

Send your answer to participation@portsmouthcc.gov.uk or by post to 20-28 Isambard Brunel Road, Portsmouth, PO1 2DR by Friday, 9 November 2012.

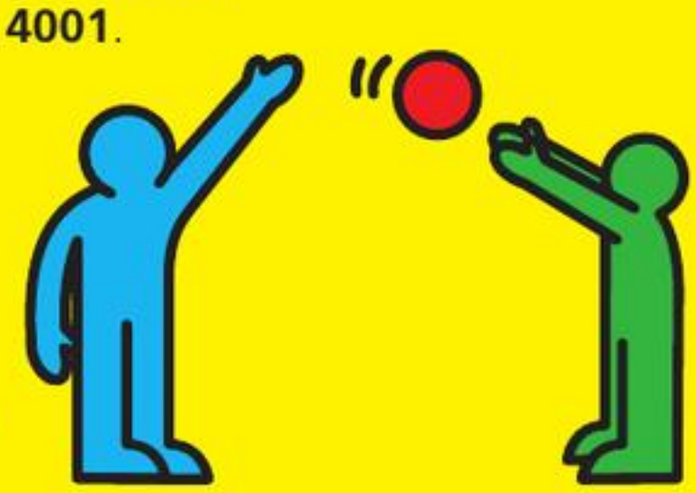
Cascades Shopping Centre is in the heart of Portsmouth city centre, with nearly 60 retail brand names including M&S, Lush, H&M, Next, Primark, Vision Express, TK Maxx, Dorothy Perkins, BHS, and a great line up of smaller shops and cafés.

Santa's fantastic Christmas grotto comes back on 22 November. Check out special offers on **www.cascades-shopping.co.uk** and find Cascades on Twitter and Facebook.

make your family happy

Active kids are happy kids – they like to be running around and having fun. Even at school they're sitting for much of the day and there are many reasons why getting outside to play or run around is challenging with busy family life – and let's face it, we could all benefit from being more active!

Suggestions from local families on how to move more and have fun can be found on our **getting active** pages (along with a children's art competition with great prizes). Just go to **www.healthypompey.com** or call **(023) 9229 4001**.



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BLOOMIN' LOVELY GARDENS

Find more photos on our Facebook page
facebook.com/lovehousetalk

Sunny sheltered success

The sheltered housing garden competition proved to be very popular with the residents this year despite growing problems with slugs, snails, rain and windy weather.

All six sheltered housing blocks took part in the competition, growing a wide range of colourful plants and flowers which they had been nurturing. One of the judges, Deputy Mayor of Havant Cllr Paul Buckley, was impressed with how wonderful our sheltered housing gardens were kept by our residents.

The overall garden winner was Don Knight of Tweed Court, who said: "I was very proud to have won the competition and to have brought a little sunshine into the residents' lives. I get great pleasure from doing the garden and hope to do so for many years to come."

All prize winners joined Don at Tweed Court with the Mayor of Havant, Cllr Gerry Shimbart, for a celebration cream tea. It was a chance to meet each other and to view the winning garden.

Bloomin' Buckland

Window boxes
First place: Teresa Murphy, Grafton Street
Joint second place: Nora North, Pam Spragg, Mr Bahrem and Audrey Arnell, Grafton Street
Third place: Kath Williams, Grafton Street

Hanging baskets
First place: Teresa Murphy, Grafton Street
Second place: Mr and Mrs Jeram, Grafton Street
Third place: Pam Spragg, Grafton Street

Pots
First place: Teresa Murphy, Grafton Street

Gardens
First place: Mrs Auston and Mrs Johnstone, Hastings House
Second place: James Clarke, Emanuel Street

Best individual blooms
Pam Parker Davies, Grafton Street

Landport area

Best containers
First place went to Janet Brierley for her amazing containers.

Somerstown area

Anne Stoddart from Stone Street won first prize for the Best Small Garden.
Ron Smith of Ian Gibson Court won the Best Sheltered Scheme Garden.
Frank Hann and Thelma Chapman of Ladywood House won Best Large Garden.

Portsea area

Community gardens
First place: Sarah Robinson House
Second place: Portsea Venture Playground

Paulsgrove planting panache

The winner was Mrs Kennedy of Copsey Grove, Paulsgrove, who not only won overall first prize, but also scooped the second prize in the hanging basket category.

Overall second prize went to Mrs McIntosh of Arthur Dann Court, whilst Mr Gower's colourful garden in Fifth Avenue was highly commended.

Pat Roland of Eskdale House won the first prize in the hanging baskets category with Mrs Kennedy coming second. Mr Cripps of Bresler House was highly commended.

Bresler House residents June Hicks and Mr Legg won first and second prizes respectively in the containers category. Pat Roland of Eskdale House was highly commended.

Joint first prize in the Little Seedlings competition went to Daniel and Natasha Rigby-Davis from Hawthorn Crescent for their brightly-coloured containers. The second prize was won by Dolci Allen, with third prize being awarded to Jemma and Kila Nicholls.

The community gardens category was won by Paulsgrove Children's Centre with Paulsgrove Adventure Playground coming second.

Wecock and Crookhorn green fingers

Brian Neville of Crookhorn was the overall winner and has lived in his home with his wife, Pat, since it was first built in 1973. Brian was thrilled to win the competition and had never entered before. He said "It's been fun this year. I just picked up a form and entered; it was easy. You just wait until next year now."

All winners were presented with their prizes by the Mayor of Havant Cllr Gerry Shimbart, over tea, cakes and coffee at the Acorn centre in Wecock Farm.

Even the children had success with growing their own potted plants in Wecock Farm. Squirrels Day Nursery had 30 children growing geraniums and other local children won prizes for their beautiful blooms.

Leigh Park

The competition was judged by a panel including Mayor of Havant Cllr Gerald Shimbart.

The overall winner of the competition was Chris Allen for the clever use she has made of her communal back yard at Woodcot Crescent. Chris has made an attractive outdoor space at minimal cost by recycling household objects and containers and using them as plant pots, and by using plant cuttings and seeds from her own established plants or from friends, family and neighbours.

Runner up was Shirley Jones from Hood House. Shirley has created a fabulous memorial garden for her mother with bright borders bursting with colourful flowers.

Council tax benefit is ending

Have your say on the proposed new local scheme

The Government are abolishing council tax benefit under the Welfare Reform Act 2012. Instead all local authorities have to set up their own council tax support scheme which will start in April 2013.

The Government are reducing the amount they give to local authorities to pay for the scheme by 10% – meaning some tough decisions will need to be made. Pensioners must be protected though so their council tax support will not change under the new scheme.

If you are liable to pay council tax to Portsmouth City Council then we want your views on our proposed local scheme.

Pop in to one of our Wednesday afternoon road shows from 2-4pm:

- **10 October** – Co-op, Twyford Avenue, Stamshaw
- **17 October** – Co-op, Sultan Road, Buckland
- **24 October** – Co-op, The Hard, Portsea
- **31 October** – Co-op, St James's Road, Somerstown
- **7 November** – Co-op, Francis Avenue, Southsea

For more information visit **www.portsmouth.gov.uk/counciltaxreform** or call **(023) 9283 4092**.

Don't live in Portsmouth?

If you are liable to pay council tax to Havant Borough Council, (for example if you live in Leigh Park or Wecock Farm), then you need to comment on their proposals.

Visit **www.havant.gov.uk/havant-12568** for more info.

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All About Tea
56 Middle Street
PO5 4BP

ALL ABOUT TEA

Problem paying council tax?

If you're a Portsmouth City Council resident and are struggling to pay your council tax, it's important you talk to us straight away.

The tax has to be paid, and the bill won't go away, but we can help you. We can see if you're eligible for benefits or discounts. And we can work out a payment plan to help you manage your bill. If you don't talk to us, and fall behind with your payments, we may have to take court action.

Melanie Combes, who leads the council's debt recovery team, said: "Council tax is a priority. It needs to go at the top of the list, but we're happy to help if you're having problems."

If you need help please contact the city help desk on (023) 9268 8588.

CONNOR'S KEEP MAKES ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

Lucky residents at Connor's Keep in Wecock Farm are over the moon as the first neighbours begin to move into their spacious new apartments.

Housing's leaseholder and commercial services team have added 50% more space to the converted flats, transforming the 44 bedsits into 32 roomy properties. The team are renovating the properties on a rolling basis for existing residents wishing to move, at an additional rental of just £6 per week.

The open-plan fitted kitchens are now large enough to accommodate a washing machine and tumble dryer. The small toilets have been transformed into large wet rooms with toilet, shower, and washbasin, and the bedrooms are big enough for a double bed or two singles. Many residents even enjoy views of the relaxing garden area.

The first lucky neighbours to relocate were Alan and Kathy Pitt who jumped at the chance of a larger flat, and moved in on 10 August. Alan said: "We are really pleased with our more spacious home."

Connor's Keep is just the first of Portsmouth's sheltered schemes to undergo a refurbishment. Housing plans to review and improve other schemes across its housing areas.

St Clare's residents go for GOLD!

Proving that sport's not just for the young, residents at Tweed and St Clare's Courts (Leigh Park) held Olympic fun afternoons to celebrate the Games that even Lord Coe himself would approve of.

They ate a buffet, played 'pass the Olympic Torch' and a ball game, and took part in a quiz. The residents also raced wind-up toys, played skittles and Connect 4.

There was a raffle, prizes, tea, cupcakes and plenty of laughs.

CLG results

The members of the residents' consortium have voted and we are pleased to announce that the following residents have been elected as representatives to the Consortium Link Group (CLG).

John Minto
Mada Abrams
Ady Blackwood
Maureen Butler
George Dominy
Gordon Goodspeed
Ray Holton
Maria Cole
Piper Tiger-Moon
Alec Young

These resident reps will act as your voice in the housing service and will represent and support you for the next three years. If there are any issues you would like to discuss with the reps, please contact the resident participation team or come along to one of the resident consortium meetings.

To find out more call the team on 0800 032 1531 or email participation@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Spotlight: Rosemary Dight

Rosemary Dight is retiring as leaseholder representative with the CLG, and has been an active member since 2004.

Rosemary has been involved in countless projects, including repairs and maintenance tendering, representing leaseholders during the formation of portfolio panel meetings, and has even petitioned Downing Street during the rent campaign in 2009.

Rosemary, who has been a leaseholder since 1996, said: "Being a CLG rep means I can influence council housing decisions and make sure the right decisions are made for residents."

Rosemary received training from the resident participation team in first aid and event planning. Her skills have helped with planning the first residents' conference, and she has also assisted with local carnivals, open days, and the Waterlooville Family Games, now in its second year.

Rosemary continued: "I have really enjoyed working with residents, councillors, and council staff. I love volunteering and working with the resident participation team and look forward to continuing with this."

Advertisement

Footie fun in Cowplain

Earlier this summer, FUNDS4U! helped sponsor a football tournament where Cowplain teenagers played against their local PCSOs (Police Community Support Officers).

The event was a great success and brought together five teams of 12-17 year olds, keeping the youngsters busy throughout the holidays.

The event was organised by two local PCSOs, David Hanson and Jim Lipscomb, giving the youngsters a chance to play against the local police team. David Hanson said: "We organised this event to give the kids something to do in the holidays, and to help put a stop to the football nuisance in the Wecock area.

"I hope that as a result of the tournament, the police team are more approachable to youngsters and we can all work together and create a better community in the Wecock area."

We gave £100 towards the event, which helped make it such a success and give the kids the chance to have fun with local PCSOs.

RESIDENTS BLING UP NEW COMMUNITY ROOM

Local residents and staff from the resident participation team have transformed the first floor of the Wecock Farm housing office into a bustling new community room.

Work began in July to create a multi-functional space, based on the vision of a group of enthusiastic residents. It can be used for training and meetings, as well as for social activities such as coffee mornings, children's fun and craft activities.

The large room has been divided into three main areas. The kids' space is full of bright colours and soft bean bags, with a chill-out area for adults to relax on comfy sofas. The craft corner has plenty of storage, with a table that can be used for training, meetings, crafts and cookery. An office area gives residents the chance to brush up on their IT skills, with free use of the internet, plus complimentary stationery.

Residents took a leading role in the design and colour scheme and even constructed the furniture, as well as painting and mounting the chalk board flowers for the children's walls.

Upcoming events include: adults craft club 18 October, 14 November and 20 December 10am – 12pm. For more information call the resident participation team on 0800 032 1531.

portsmouth book fest 2012

Meet Britain's most famous SAS solider at Portsmouth Bookfest

Former SAS soldier Andy McNab is just one of many best-selling authors appearing at Portsmouth's Bookfest.

From 20 October to 4 November, a host of Britain's favourite authors will head to the city and you can meet them for as little as £4.

Andy McNab, author of *Bravo Two Zero*, said: "I'm looking forward to meeting people face-to-face, telling some stories and explaining where the ideas for my books come from.

"We all enjoy hearing a really good tale, and that's what reading is all about. If I can help get a few more people using their libraries and coming along to events like this, then great."

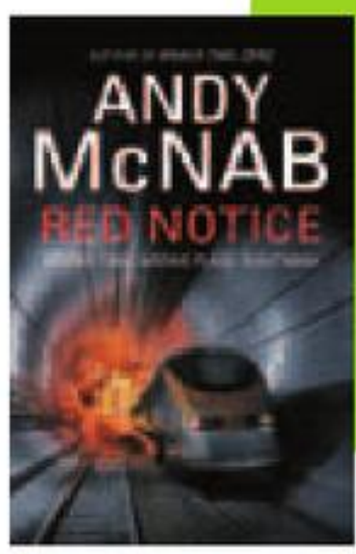
Another author appearing is James Herbert, Britain's number one chiller writer, author of *The Rats* and *The Fog*.

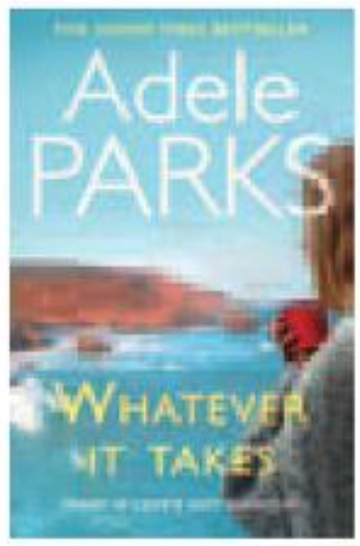
Crime writers Ann Cleeves (ITV's *Vera*) and Pauline Rowson will appear with forensic police experts for CSI Portsmouth, where crime fiction meets crime fact.

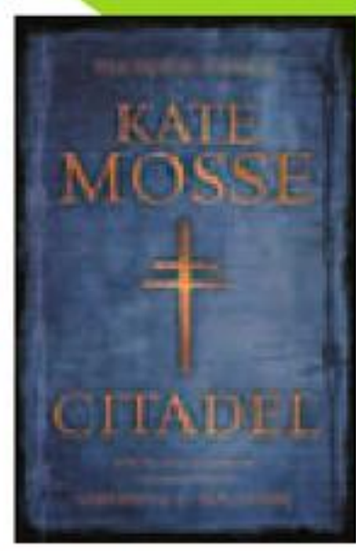
Chick-lit authors including Adele Parks and Emily Barr are also appearing in a night of girlie pampering and talking.

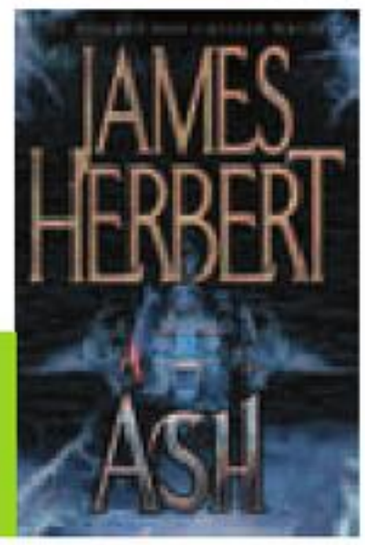
Library card holders can get a £1 discount on tickets, with most events costing £5.

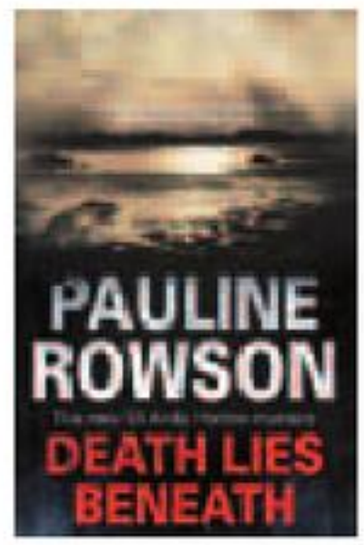
For more information visit **www.portsmouthbookfest.co.uk** or call **023 9268 8037**.







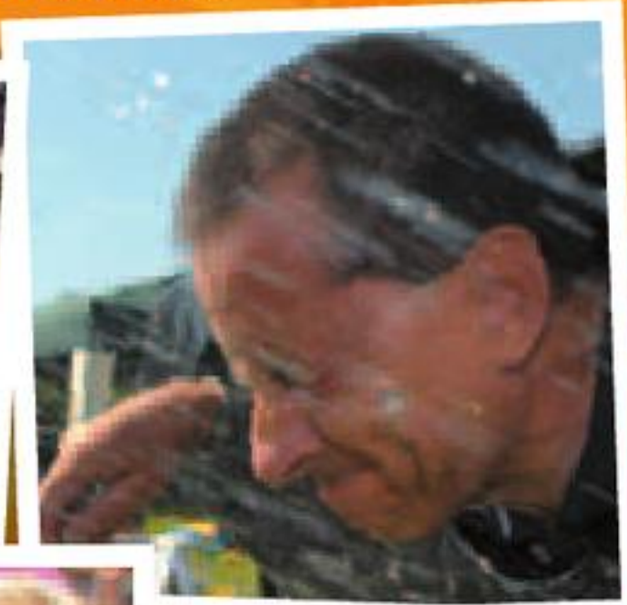




Fun family event returns for a second year

Waterlooville residents made the most of some fabulous September weather as the annual fun-filled family games returned for a second year.

Inspired by this summer's incredible Olympic Games, residents and volunteers put together another successful community event packed with activities, demonstrations and taster sessions.



Budding athletes raced to victory, and children received medals for their speedy sprints. The swashbuckling sword fencing roadshow wowed spectators, and displays of dancing, belly dancing and jiggly wrigglers got toes tapping.

Angel Radio entertained the crowds while adults and kids enjoyed ice creams, hot food, a free bouncy castle, face painting, and crafts. The charity raffle raised lots of money for the Rowans, Macmillan Cancer Care and Help for Heroes.

Cllr Bastin dressed up as ringleader Arnold, and greeted the Mayor of Havant, Cllr Gerald Shimbart, who opened the event.

Community safety officers, who helped to organise the event, said: "We've been involved from the start and it's a lovely day."

The games were supported by the resident participation team, Havant Borough Council, Guinness-Hermitage, Waterlooville Community Association and Mill Hill Children's Centre. Volunteer staff from Asda helped to clean up the litter, and recycled all but four of the 22 bags collected.

Mini gardens galore in Wecock

Children in Wecock Farm recently got gardening – in miniature.

Volunteers from the Acorn centre, WI and housing, helped those who came and joined in the fun of planting and designing their own gardens. Children at the local Squirrels Day Nursery also joined in with their helper, Beth.

Water features, designer sheds, patios and even bridges were used in the mini gardens.

Lyn Palmer, grandmother to Isabel, six, said: "We've really enjoyed doing a garden together."

Holly Beauvoisin, 11, designed her garden with her friends, Atlanta and Zack. Holly said "Doing a garden was good and a lot of fun."

The judges had a tough choice to decide the outright winning garden, but first prize went to Lucinda and Peter for their wonderful creation with other prize winners, George, Toni and Chloe.

Coffee and crafts!

Pickwick House, Buckland, is holding coffee mornings and craft events and all are welcome to come along.

The coffee mornings are:

Wednesday – 10.30am to 12noon
Thursday – 10.30am to 12noon
Friday – 10.30am to 12noon

Craft club is on Friday afternoons and runs from 1pm until 3pm.

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Solent NHS
NHS Trust

We're looking for members like you...

...and you ...and you ...and you

...and you ...and you

Solent NHS Trust provides community and mental health services across Southampton, Portsmouth and parts of Hampshire. We are looking to recruit members to join the organisation as part of our journey to become a Foundation Trust.

By becoming a member you can:

- receive regular information about us and our services via newsletters
- be invited to members' meetings which will include opportunities for you to hear from local experts on a health subject of interest
- be invited to give your views on our plans for the future through questionnaires, focus groups and meetings
- be able to vote in elections to the Council of Governors
- be able to stand for election to the Council of Governors.

If you live in Hampshire and are 14 years or over, visit www.solent.nhs.uk/membership to complete our online registration form.

For more information please email membership@solent.nhs.uk or call 023 8060 8889.

www.solent.nhs.uk *Better health, local care*

your community • your health • your nhs

Kids enjoy free festival fun

Over 1,500 children enjoyed free festive fun this summer at our six fabulous adventure playgrounds.

Stamshaw kick-started the celebrations with their summer party. Kids soaked up the sun and had a splashing time with games, food, and live music.

Paulsgrove was transformed into the OK Corral as the Wild West came to town. Kids threw themselves into themed arts, crafts and games.

Landport playground attracted a whopping 500 visitors to the adventure seaside. An ice cream van chilled everyone out as they tried their luck at seaside stalls and activities.

Kids in Somerstown enjoyed a fun day with party-themed activities, games, arts and crafts and yummy food.

Wild West Buckland kids took on a bucking bronco, and got stuck into rodeo games, a tin-can alley shoot-out, panning for gold, teepee-making, music and a host of themed activities.

Portsea children ramped it up at their urban street party with graffiti artists, skateboarding, scooter and BMX demonstrations. Kids put pedal power into delicious healthy drinks made with a smoothie bike, using free fruit kindly donated by MMD Shipping.

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out&about

OCTOBER ★ NOVEMBER

All events are FREE

Until 4 November
A Tale of One City
City Museum. Portsmouth during the life of Dickens. Tuesday–Sunday and bank holidays 10am–5pm.

OCTOBER

Until 12 October
60+ Festival
Free activities and events for over 60s living in Portsmouth. Pick up a brochure in community centres and libraries or phone 023 9283 4698 for more information.

7 Sunday Market
Port Solent. 11am–5pm.

7 Goodwood Breakfast Club
Soft Top Sunday. 8am–12pm.

10 Fratton neighbourhood forum
City Girls, St Mary's Road. 7.15pm.

17 Milton neighbourhood forum
Mary Rose School, Gisors Road. 7pm.

20 Oct–2 Dec
John Mynott
Aspex. 11am–4pm.

21 Hampshire Farmers' Market
Palmerston Road 10am–2pm.

21 Meet the Curators
Royal Marines Museum. 10am–5pm.

21 Seafarers Service
Portsmouth Cathedral and Nelson's Memorial, Old Portsmouth. 11am. 023 9282 6722.

22 Rag-rugging
Beddow Library. Taster session. 1pm–4pm. 023 9273 1848.

24 Stamshaw and Tipner neighbourhood forum
Leisure Centre. 7pm.

27–28 Eastney Beam Engine House open day
Henderson Road, Eastney. 1pm–5pm. Last admission 4.30pm.

27–28 Great South Run weekend
5k run from 10.30am, mini run from 12pm and junior run from 1pm on Saturday. Bupa Great South Run from 10.15am on Sunday.

28 Crafts in the Tower
Square Tower. 11am–4pm. www.craftsinthetower.com 07952 595171.

30 Toads and Toadstools
Cumberland House. Family wildlife activities. 12pm–3pm.

31 Halloween Trick or Treat Treasure Hunt
Port Solent. Suitable for ages two to 12. From 11am.

31 Spooky Tell, Make and Take
City Museum. Not suitable for the very young. 12pm–2.30pm.

31 Cape Horn Capers
National Museum of the Royal Navy, Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. Free drop-in workshop, all ages welcome. 11am–1pm and 2pm–4pm.

NOVEMBER

1 After Hours
Aspex. Open mic night. 7pm–9pm.

1–4 Half-term Activities
Gunwharf Quays, Central Square. 12pm–4pm. Activities with a Harry Potter theme.

2 Bookbinding
Cosham Library. 9.30am–12.30pm. 023 9237 6023 to book.

2 Fireworks
Gunwharf Quays. Plus entertainment. From 6pm.

3 Love Southsea Market
Palmerston Road. 9am–5.30pm.

3 Southsea Boutique Market
Little Johnny Russell's pub, Albert Road. 12pm–4.30pm.

3 Become Fagin or Oliver for the day!
City Museum. Ideal for nine to 15 year-olds. 12pm–3pm.

4 Goodwood Breakfast Club
Continental Classics, 8am–12pm. www.goodwood.com/breakfastclub

4 Southsea Boutique Market
Portsmouth Guildhall. 11am–3pm. Also 25 November and 2 December.

7 City Fireworks
King George V Playing Fields. Entertainment starts at 6pm. Fireworks at 7.30pm.

9 Handmade Beads
Cosham library. 9.30am–12.30pm. 023 9237 6023 to book.

9–11 Christmas Food Fayre
Gunwharf Quays. From 10am.

11 Remembrance Sunday
D-Day Museum.10am–5pm.

11 Remembrance Sunday Service
Guildhall Square. 10.30am. 023 9282 6722.

14 North End neighbourhood forum
North End Bowls Club, entrance in Beresford Road. 7.15pm.

15 Fireworks and Fairylights
Palmerston Road precinct. Southsea Christmas light switch-on, 4pm–6pm. 023 9282 6722.

16 Fun with Embroidery
Cosham library. 9.30am–12.30pm. 023 9237 6023 to book.

16 Nov–24 Dec
Bavarian-style Christmas Market
City Centre. 9am–5.30pm. 023 9282 6722.

17 Christmas Lights Switch-On
Gunwharf Quays. Entertainment from 5.30pm with fireworks finale.

18 Hampshire Farmers' Market
Palmerston Road 10am–2pm.

22 City Centre Christmas Lights
Commercial Road. Christmas lights switch-on. 4pm–6pm. 023 9282 6722.

23 Nov–1 Jan
Christmas Craft Exhibition
Aspex. 11am–4pm.

24–25 Eastney Beam Engine House Open Day
Henderson Road, Eastney. 1pm–5pm.

25 Crafts in the Tower
Square Tower. 11am–4pm. 07952 595171 www.craftsinthetower.com

28 Cosham Christmas Lights
Cosham precinct. Christmas lights switch-on. 4pm–6pm. 023 9282 6722.

30 North End Celebration of Lights
St Marks Church, Derby Road. 4pm–5.30pm. 023 9282 6722.

kids talk

What was happening in 1912 when the first council houses were built?

King Edward V was already King in 1912, and was 60 years old when he came to the throne. A keen hunter, he once shot an elephant in Africa, cut its tail off and jumped on its side to do a dance. To his surprise the elephant stood up and staggered off into the jungle!

On 15 April 1912, the world's largest ship, RMS Titanic, hit an iceberg and sank during her first ever voyage from Southampton to New York, sending over 1,500 people to an icy grave.

Jokes

What's another name for the Middle Ages?
Knight time

Why was King Alfred called 'The Great'?
Because Alfred the Blooming Marvellous would have sounded silly

Soul Cakes

Soul cakes come from a Celtic recipe and were really popular in the Middle Ages. Each cake represented a soul and when eaten, the soul would be released from purgatory into the afterlife. Children would go 'souling' during Halloween to peoples' doors, or the cakes were left out with a glass of wine or milk – the early origins of trick or treat!

A soul! A soul! A soul-cake!
Please good Missis, a soul-cake!
An apple, a pear, a plum, or a cherry,
Any good thing to make us all merry.
One for Peter, two for Paul,
Three for Him who made us all

Get your fangs around these sweet treats. Ask an adult to help with this recipe as it involves some cooking.

Preheat the oven to 220C/ gas mark 7.

1. Grease a baking tray.
2. Sieve 375g plain flour, ½ tsp salt, 2 tsp nutmeg, 2 tsp mixed spice, into a large bowl. Add 90g currants and 90g sultanas, or 180g of small dried berries.
3. Use a fork or food processor to mix 185g soft cubed butter with 155g caster sugar until pale and fluffy, then gradually add 1 egg and 125ml milk.
4. Add the dry ingredients and mix until you have a nice firm dough.
5. Divide the dough into 12 round cakes and flatten to make them look like thick biscuits.
6. Bake for 10 – 15 minutes in the centre of the oven, then cool on a wire rack. Eat and enjoy!

Putrid Pompey: the spooky sailor

An unfortunate sailor met a sticky end, when he was murdered in the 19th century in Portsea's famous Blue Posts Inn. Secretly buried in the pub's dingy courtyard, the vengeful ghost haunted the inn until it went up in flames in 1870. To this day a gravestone marks the spot where his body was later buried, put there to calm the ghost in 1938 – we hope it's worked!